



Kanaka Peak Loop Trail



The view from the top is the much deserved reward after climbing the steep slopes.

TRAILHEAD DIRECTIONS

Starting at the Whiskeytown Visitor Center, drive south on Kennedy Memorial Drive towards Whiskeytown Dam. The road forks. Take the left fork which becomes Paige Bar Road. Do not take the right fork over the dam. Turn right on Peltier Valley Road across from the Mt. Shasta Mine parking area.

The Kanaka Peak trailhead is located approximately 1.1 miles from the Peltier Bridge Campground. The road is open from late spring through late fall, depending on weather. It is unpaved and crosses a shallow stream. A high-clearance vehicle is recommended. When the road is closed, park at the campground. If this is the case, hike up the road to the trailhead or use Logging Camp Trail (see this guide for directions) to access the Kanaka Peak Trail.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION

The trail is a loop and can be explored in either direction. This guide describes the trail in a clockwise direction. Starting at the trailhead sign, immediately cross Paige Boulder Creek. Just 100 feet from the creek, Kanaka Peak Trail forks; this is the loop. Take the left fork which parallels the creek for the next couple of miles. Cross the creek at 0.25 mile.

At 0.8 mile, the trail forks, take the left fork. Pass the right fork, the Kanaka Cutoff.

At 1.0 mile, pass Logging Camp Trail on the left. (In winter when Peltier Valley Road is closed this is the access to the Kanaka Loop Trail.) Pass the

Ridge Trail also on the left, a short distance farther. The trail descends slowly down to Paige Boulder Creek. Cross the creek at 1.6 miles from the trailhead. Pass Paige Boulder Creek and Martha's Ditch Trails, also on the left.

The trail continues up Kanaka Peak with two very steep ascents, especially near the summit. It passes through an open black oak/mixed conifer forest. Much of the area burned in the Kanaka Wildfire of 1990 that resulted in an open forest where wildlife may be spotted. Black tailed mule deer, black bear, or even a Pacific fisher may be seen if one is quiet. Squirrels and songbirds are ever present. Wildfire opened many areas that now have prolific wildflowers. April is the peak wildflower season, but flowers can be found almost any month of the year. During the ascent, look back and see Whiskeytown Lake.

From the top of Kanaka Peak, the Trinity Alps can be seen to the northwest, Redding and the Lassen Range to the east. The grassy hills of Igo and Ono are to the south, with the Yolla Bolly Mountains beyond. The forested canyon pictured above is Clear Creek Canyon, located to the south. Mount Shasta is to the north, white with snow in the winter. Also to the north is Whiskeytown Lake.

The trail continues north, along a ridge, dipping into a saddle and climbing back up. Here the trail parallels the western border of the park. The forest is open at the ridge top with grasses and multiple species of wildflowers in the spring. On this same ridge top, the trail will fork near the Whiskeytown sign. Take the right fork; the left fork continues north towards South Fork Mountain.

Hiking back down gentle switchbacks, notice that the forest is very different from the other end of the trail. This is a denser canopy forest with more moisture in the summer. Douglas fir becomes more dominant, tan oak and Pacific madrone may also be seen.

At 1.3 miles from the peak, pass the top of the Kanaka Cutoff trail. Approximately .25 mile later the trail crosses a small creek. The creek flows down slick bedrock creating beautiful rock formations and small waterfalls. This is a great area to explore for a few minutes or stop for a snack. Watch out for slippery rocks!

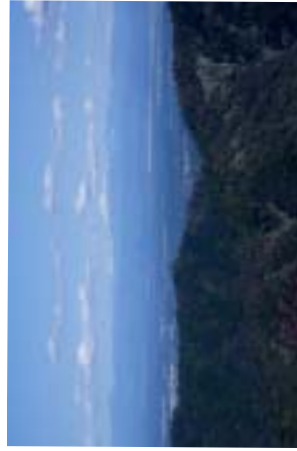
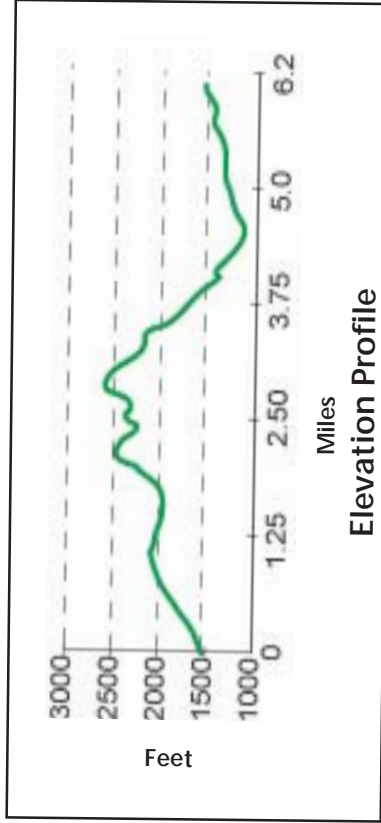
The trail descends gradually, passing the Peltier Trail on the left, 2 miles from the peak. At 3.0 miles from the peak, cross Paige Boulder Creek to return back to the trailhead.

FEATURES

Difficulty Level: Moderate to difficult
Length: 6.5 mile loop trail
Multiple creek crossings
Open black oak, mixed conifer forests
Excellent views from Kanaka Peak (2616 feet)
This trail connects to Peliter Valley, Logging Camp and the Kanaka Cutoff Trails.



View of Clear Creek Canyon.



View of Mt. Lassen and Redding from Kanaka Peak looking east.



Milkmaids or Toothwort (Caradine californica) bloom in March and are seen in shady, moist areas. They are white to pinkish in color with four petals.



Abundant wildflowers can be found along the trail during the spring months.



Use caution when crossing creeks. There are three crossings of Paige Boulder Creek. During the winter months the creek depth may range from ankle to waist deep. Do not attempt crossing the creek in high flows or if you are not comfortable stepping on slippery rocks. During the summer and fall months the creek can usually be crossed with dry feet. Water flows may also increase shortly after rainstorms.